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BEONIO-BROCCHIERI FUMAGALLI

# THE LOGIC OF ABELARD



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# THE LOGIC OF ABELARD

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TEXTS AND STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF  
LOGIC AND PHILOSOPHY

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## PREMISE

The purely 'philosophical' importance of logical Abelardian research has been emphasized by Mario Dal Pra in his introduction to the edition of the *Glosse Letterali*. In this volume it seems important in my eyes to illustrate not only the interest of Abelardian dialectic techniques (which are at times penetrated by positions which are still realistic), but also, and above all, the importance of his total attitude towards the 'scientia scientiarum', stated in advance by a freer and braver mentality that is later to use this instrument for its rigorous definition of philosophical research.

When studying Abelardian dialectic I have preferred to follow the line of development of his inquiry, from meaning to syllogistic calculation. This line does not, however, coincide perfectly with the expositive progress of the various commentaries, from the *Isagoge* to the Boetian texts; the trail has thus been marked out for me by some of the Palatine Master's statements rather than by the order of the comments.

The perspective of this research is, generally speaking, given from the viewpoint of contemporary formal logic, a viewpoint that is nevertheless implicit, even, I think, if it is at work in inquiry. In fact, in an attempt to have a clearer picture of the historical importance of the author and his meaning in a dialogue which is mediaeval, I have tried, as far as possible, to keep the language constantly in the tone of those times, and I have tried to avoid certain equations – unprecise and sterile in my opinion – between Abelardian logical formulae and contemporary logical formulae. I hope that what will be of interest from a modern viewpoint is Abelard's total attitude.

## FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

The delicacy – and at times the ambivalence – of the Abelardian position in the logical debate of his time has recently been brought to light by De Rijk in his work *Logica Modernorum*: the weight of the metaphysical perspective and the lack of a clear cut with the psychological and gnoseological implications of the theory of the *significatio* do not, however, exclude the presence of a *contextual approach* in the Palatine Master's attitude.

I think, therefore, that an analytical reading of Abelard's philosophical texts is an important, indeed obligatory, step in the study of the birth and development both of the *suppositio* theory and of terminist logic on the whole.

Milan, March 1969

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